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## Poetry.

### THE OLD YEAR.

With mournful tone I hear thee say,—  
"Alas, another year hath sped!"  
As if within that circle lay  
Life's garland, dead.

Value thought! Thy measure is not Time's;  
Nor thus yields life each glowing hue;  
Fair fruit may fall,—the tendrils climb,  
And clasps anew.

Time hath mute landmarks of his own;  
They are not such as may be raised;  
Not his the ruddy numbered stone  
On life's broad ways.

The record-measuring his speed  
Is but a shadow soft or spread,  
A brow or leaf,—a broken reed,  
Or millaw shed.

And if his footfall crush the flower,  
How sweet the spicy perfume springs!  
His mildew stain upon the tower  
A glory brings.

Then let the murmuring voice be still,  
The heart hold fast its treasure bright;  
The heart grows warm when sunbeams chill,  
Life hath no night.

The fast full-ripened day is garnered to its  
place,  
Like some rich fruit-axe stored by careful hand,  
And Twilight, angel of the shade-wreathed  
face,  
Drapes her brown vestures over sea and land.

Dim weeps the moon, behind strange mists,  
afar,  
Leading her mourners slowly up the sky;  
The wind comes stealing thro' its gates ajar,  
And sobs and whispers, "The Old Year  
must die."

Alas! for earthly friendships are but few,  
And of all friends Time surely is man's best;  
And this gray year is Time's child, brave and  
true,  
Stronger, mayhap, for us, than all the rest.

To die! Eternity comes moving on,  
The last, faint moments fall,—he strikes the  
line,  
Sad moans each number thro' the heart,—'tis  
gone!  
The echo, benediction and farewell.

## Religious.

### CONFERENCE ON EVANGELISTIC WORK IN LONDON.

An important meeting of ministers, with other Christian workers took place in Cannon-street Hotel on Tuesday Dec. 1st. After tea a short prayer-meeting was held to implore the Divine blessing upon the proceedings. At half-past six the Conference commenced in the great hall, and was largely attended by ministers of all denominations. Indeed, such a sight has probably seldom been witnessed even in that place of monster religious meetings, and we could but think that the tone and character of the gathering augured well for forthcoming blessings on the masses. The chair was occupied by Mr. Robert Baxter. The hymn, "Come, let us join" having been heartily sung, prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. O'Neill.

The Chairman, in a few opening remarks, said that the oldest of them could never remember any season in the Church of Christ throughout our land when the manifest presence of God, the power of the Holy Ghost in the conversion of souls, and the awakening of Christians was so generally felt as at the present time. It was not only in the North and in the West, but everywhere, in every section of the Church where the people assembled to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit, where they had been bowed down to ask, God had abundantly given. Times of refreshing were a matter of history concerning the past. From the beginning of the century there had been a revival which was broader and deeper now than heretofore. The Lord had been working, the church had been roused, and her energy had been brought forth, and the Gospel had been carried to the millions more widely and freely than it had been for the last fifty years. The order of their present proceedings would be that three of their brethren—one from Edinburgh, one from Dublin, and one from Belfast—would speak for about twenty minutes, each giving a detailed account of the marvellous work in those localities. Then they would submit three resolutions, space being allowed for any remarks in re-

ference to the subject. He need not add that the Lord greatly blessed instrumentally, and He had been pleased to use Messrs Moody and Sankey to do a wonderful work in the North. They were expected in London, and they might hope to see this great city moved in a manner in which it had not hitherto been affected by the preaching of God's Word, and the gathering of the people together for prayer. (Cheers)

The Rev. Scott Moncrieff, of St. Thomas' English Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, said it was with great pleasure he appeared before them to give some account of God's marvellous work during the past year in Edinburgh. More than a year ago he was asked by a friend to attend a series of prayer-meetings for a blessing upon the expected visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey. He did not, however, go, for he confessed he had a prejudice against the movement. He had always taken an interest in revival work, but he felt a prejudice to the plan of their two American brethren; he knew not why, but fancied they were making too much of the instruments. However, when they appeared he took the earliest opportunity of going and judging for himself. The first few sentences he heard from the lips of Mr. Moody did not recommend him, but very soon he felt he was indeed an honoured instrument in the Lord's hand for doing a great work. There was no brilliant eloquence, no great learning, or anything of that kind, but there was a quiet, earnest, simple setting forth of the loving Saviour before the people. He forgot the man entirely, and merely thought of what he was saying, and he was greatly interested and touched. In the meetings held there was no unnatural excitement, but vast crowded audiences, all earnestly hungering for the bread of life, the felt presence of the great Lord Himself being amongst them. And then when Mr. Sankey sang—and he must confess it was against this singing he had prejudice—he said to Mr. Moody that friends were complaining; in reply to which he said Christ's advent was sung a long time before it was preached on the morning of His birth. He saw Mr. Sankey had a special gift, and was making good use of it. The singular power with which in singing he caused every word to be distinctly heard by the vast audience, and the simple beauty of some of his hymns stirred the hearts of all who heard. The work soon increased, and it became manifest that Mr. Moody was a power not only as a preacher but in stirring up others, and at the various meetings which were held in different churches and halls where the evangelists themselves could not attend, yet where there was the same simple, earnest setting forth of a loving Saviour, there the same impression evidently was made. In general result, he observed, the movement was blessed first in quickening spiritual life in the Edinburgh churches, then in drawing Christians together, as he had never before seen them. Christians of all denominations met to bear testimony to their common Saviour. (Cheers.) This had been the most precious result in Scotland, especially considering they had the character of being a sort of theological porcupines. Certainly a vast number of their quills had been drawn. (A laugh.) Another result was that real Christian work and devotion had been enormously increased. Their mid-day prayer-meeting in Edinburgh was a perfect wonder; it consisted of an address by the chairman, and voluntary petitions for special subjects presented by individuals, no person being expected to occupy more than five minutes. In all the meetings he had never witnessed anything like unhealthy excitement, but a deep spirit of real devotion, all feeling they were evidently very near the Great Master. Christ was preached, and that was the best way to preach repentance; and as a result men's whole lives had been changed—of which the speaker quoted several in-

stances, one being that of a friend whose six domestic servants had been converted. He looked forward with intense interest and hope to the results of the anticipated movement in London, and counselled the friends to give a hearty welcome and support, for the more they looked at the work the more they would look at the Saviour leading them on, and the better they would be drawn together to bear faithful testimony for Him. It would be his most earnest prayer that he who had been so blessed in Scotland might cause the power of the truth to be felt in London as it had never been felt before; that hearts might be moved and souls quickened; that Christians might feel they had glorious work to do for Him; and that many, many poor lost wandering sheep might be gathered into the fold.

The Rev. H. M. Williamson, Presbyterian minister, of Belfast, in a very stirring address said he felt deeply the responsibility of addressing them, because he felt that the issues of that meeting would be far greater than any of them could probably then foresee. London for Christ meant, in a sense, the world for Christ; it was the heart of the whole civilised world; and while rejoicing greatly at the work elsewhere, he could truly say at their prayer-meeting they had been turning with hope, expectation, and anxiety, to know what the Lord would do in that mighty Babylon—London; because they felt that the works in the provinces, however great and blessed, were necessarily circumscribed and local, but if it pleased Almighty God, through any instrumentality, to move, even in the same proportion, London, as He had the country, untold blessings must result throughout the world. (Cheers.) He knew there was great prejudice against revivals for some reasons, especially with the ministry, but he would only remind them that whatever their thoughts and feelings might be about it, the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and the history of the Church since, showed that it had been God's way periodically to lift up His cause when low, by what they were accustomed to call revivals. (Hear.) He described with some detail the visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to Belfast, and stated that their success might be greatly attributed to the fact that they always preached the three R's of the Gospel. The methods obtained access to the popular mind, and the Lord had set His seal by adding thousands of souls. One important feature in the revival was the "anxious meeting." He believed the general ministry lacked much power, because of their lack of these private helps to the public teaching. Children had been largely gathered in, and he exhorted them not to look doubtfully on the conversion of boys and girls. The work was still going on, though the Evangelists had left, and was largely spreading in the country. He concluded by an earnest appeal for united effort on behalf of London, urging that in response to their work of faith and labour of love God would flood the city with a flood of blessing. (Cheers.)

The Rev. F. Downing, of the Church of Ireland, Dublin, described the work in Dublin. They had meetings in the Exhibition Palace, the like of which, as to numbers, he really believed had never previously been held, and it was significant, and wonderfully encouraging, that such crowded meetings should be in the cause of religion and truth. The general result he stated as very similar to that already described in Belfast, many of the incidents narrated being remarkably striking. Speaking of the bishops and archdeacons in their relation to the work, he mentioned an instance where one of the latter had refused to attend the revival meetings "as he did not want to turn Moody's head." He told the archdeacon he evidently did not know what Mr. Moody was made of, for he was sure he (Mr. Moody) would not care the snap of his finger if all the bishops of the kingdom were listening to him.

He preached the Christ, and heaven for lost sinners, hence his power. Although he (the speaker) was, at first, much prejudiced against the movement, he was afterwards wonderfully impressed with what he witnessed. Roman Catholic doctrines were not specially held up to contempt, only the Cross was lifted, and the result was many Catholic conversions took place. One Catholic disputed the meeting he attended being Protestant, upon which he was asked what he would call it, as it certainly was not Catholic. "Why," said he, "it is an American talking with the Irish, a sort of international communion." (A laugh.) He prayed for great blessings on the forthcoming mission to London.

The Rev. Chas. Moston proposed, and the Rev. J. T. Wigner, of New Cross, seconded, the first resolution, which, with a modification adopted by the suggestion and practical aid of the Rev. Dr. Allon, was to the effect: that deeply impressed with the value of unadorned prayer and supplication as the sure earnest of God's richest blessing, and thankfully acknowledging the goodness of God in the spirit of prayer so abundantly poured out upon His people in these days, they resolved to encourage existing prayer-meetings, and where they could, to establish others, a daily meeting to be held in the chapel kindly offered by Dr. Allon for the purpose. Two other resolutions were also passed: "To give Messrs. Moody and Sankey a hearty welcome to London, and harmoniously, without sectarian distinction, to render them all possible aid."

The Chairman announced that the committee had taken the Agricultural Hall, Islington, for nine weeks from March next for the evangelists and they invited offers of hall accommodation free throughout London during their intended four months' visit from March to June next—Baptist.

The following speech from the *Boston Advertiser*, was sent to us by a friend with the remark "It shews that the 'heathen' are not such fools as we sometimes think. Perhaps you can find room for it some time." It will be read with interest as a sample of the Chinese mind, greatly modified, however, by contact with Americans.

### SPEECH OF THE HON. CHAN LAISUN, OF CHINA,

AT THE MEETING IN NEWBURYPORT, MASS., IN BEHALF OF THE PROPOSED UNIVERSITY FOR INSTRUCTION IN MODERN LANGUAGES.

Ladies and Gentlemen:—It is somewhat embarrassing for a foreigner to speak a foreign language, and, in the course of my speech, if you find any glaring faults, any unpardonable grammatical construction, you will be kind enough to overlook that, and look to the substance rather than to the grammar and the language. I know that so many able speakers before me have paid so many eulogiums upon China that I feel now already sinking. I feel just like a little baby with so many gold ornaments, bracelets, and pearls and diamonds on all in a heap, as if it wanted to bawl right out. But being adorned with such precious things, of course I must prove worthy of them. I am to give you the system of Chinese education; how we try to put education on a very superior and high footing in China. No doubt all of you, from the youngest to the oldest in this audience, know that China is a very old country. And its population! I have heard an expression like this: "The population is so great it is much like the locusts; like the bees that swarm in summer." The population there is so great that universal education in the empire would be considered very hard; but at the same time we think that we have put the educational system on such a footing that the poorest of the poor can go to our schools. It is not supported by public funds, nor is it endowed; but a school-teacher may open a school anywhere, and he will have from five even to fifty scholars, and each boy, I

speak of boys, because in China girls are not very much thought of, and their education is much neglected—each pupil pays two dollars a year. So that if a teacher has ten pupils he will make ten dollars a year. I don't suppose he will get rich off that very soon. He can't have beefsteak every day, or roast beef, or chop either, but he can live on vegetable and salt fish. Now from ancient time up to this present our civilization has been just the same, say about 3,000 years, or about 1,000 years before the Christian era. The system of education at this present time and that 3,000 years ago are precisely alike. Our districts, our cities, our villages, our hamlets—all have their universities, colleges, and schools, and into these schools all boys go, not because they are supported by public funds, but because they see the necessity of learning, so as to be able to go into the world with some knowledge in their heads. You will ask, what do they learn? Do they learn grammar, geography, philosophy, psychology, mental philosophy, chemistry, algebra, trigonometry, conic sections? These are modern inventions, I think. We don't get so far as that.

We confine ourselves entirely to the classics; and what are the classics? I will tell you. Classics are not Grecian or Roman, neither are they the Sanskrit; but these classics dwell particularly upon filial love, upon the government of one's own family. This is the root, this is the nut confined in a little shell, that rules the whole empire. If one family governs its children well and the children render to their family filial love and respect, that family is a model; then there are a thousand families all following the same course, that town is a model, and with these increased to 10,000, the city is a model, and that 10,000 increased to millions, that country is a model, and wherever you find a country that is well governed in its families, where children pay their due respect to their parents, that country is a model country. It is the first fundamental law, and it is that, I think, kept intact for three or four thousand years, which has made China an independent nation, and a nation that has preserved its integrity and its unity. Now, as I was about to say, the emperor sends his chancellor into these schools and he examines the candidates for admission to a higher grade. There are about 15,000 of them, each one occupying a little place by himself, like a horse-stall. About twelve o'clock at night the chancellor would give out his subject. The English version of it would be: "The greatest virtue that a filial son can show to his parents is obedience." Now that is the text of an essay. This is called the prefecture examination, and after the essays are all examined, one hundred and twelve candidates are selected—a very small proportion from 15,000. Every three years each prefecture sends 150 or 200 students to the triennial examination, when 15,000 will be gathered, from whom only 72 are selected. Every four years they send these young men up to the capital—to Peking—and if they there go through their examination successfully, then they obtain what we call the degree of Master of Arts. After that they are examined again, and then they are admitted into what we call the imperial college. When a man attains that place, he is eligible to any position, although from the first time you prove yourself successful in your competitive examination, you are eligible to any office to which the throne may appoint you. So I don't care whether a man is poor or rich, or whether his parents have anything in the way of reputation or celebrity, the poor man's son, or even beggar's son, is just as good as the prime minister's son, if he only shows he has the talent. He is eligible even to the prime minister's chair. And thus the throne is supported by this great mass of literary men, and these literary men are the *vox populi*, as we call it here. The emperor does not do anything without asking the ad-